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PSC 120.01: Introduction to Comparative Government and Politics

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THE UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA
Department of Political Science

PSc 120 Introduction to
Comparative Politics
Autumn 2001

Dr. M. Laslovich
Office: LA 354
Hrs: T 10-11:00, 1:30-2:30,
W 10-11:00, R 1:30-2:30,
and by app't (4418).

Course Description

An introduction to the key concepts and values political scientists use to understand how societies govern themselves in face of a wide variety of political, cultural, historical, and economic circumstances and dilemmas. The course addresses contrasting political cultures, ideologies and philosophies, constitutional frameworks, party and electoral systems among democratic and authoritarian states. According to Jeffrey Kopstein and Mark Lichbach, the three major concepts of comparative political analysis – interests, identities, and institutions, shape the politics of nations.

The following questions are addressed: 1. Why are countries governed so differently? 2. How did this diversity originate? 3. Will capitalism retain its appeal and spread further in the 21st century, or will new and hostile systems challenge capitalism?

Course Objectives

Upon completion of this course, students should have a basic understanding of the key concepts and values political scientists use to understand how different regime types govern themselves as well as the challenges and conflicts that are reshaping political life across the globe.

Texts

Students are required to read the following texts, which are available at the University Bookstore:

Kopstein, Jeffrey and Mark Lichbach, eds. Comparative Politics, Interests, Identities, and institutions in a Changing Global Order. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000, and

Soe, Christian, ed. Comparative Politics 01/02, Annual Editions. 19th ed. Sluice Dock, Connecticut: Dushkin/McGraw-Hill, 2001.

Course Requirements

Students will be evaluated upon the following basis:

Exam 1 (Oct. 8) Topics I-II	25%
Exam 2 (Oct. 29) Topic III	25%
Exam 3 (Nov. 19) Topic IV	25%
Final Exam (Tues., Dec. 18, 1:10-3:10) Topic V-VI	25%

Drop/Add Deadlines

Sept. 24 - Last day to drop and add courses by Dial Bear and receive full refund.

Oct. 15 - Last day to drop (no refund) and add classes and to change grading option.

Dec. 14 - Last day for drop/grade option petitions.

Makeup Exam Policy

Students who are excused from a scheduled exam may write a makeup. In fairness to all students, the instructor must approve exam absences.

The Classroom Learning Environment (authored by Dr. Ronald Perrin, Professor of Political Theory)

Wherever the learning process takes place (for example, in the library or the seclusion of one's study) it does so best when there are a minimum of distractions. This requirement poses special challenges for the learning that takes place in the lecture hall or the classroom, where the possibility of distractions is the greatest.

In order to establish and maintain a supportive learning environment for my students I will not tolerate the few individuals who might be prone to: a) come to class late or leave early, b) carry on private conversations during class, or c) use the lecture hall/classroom as an opportunity to read material, such as the Kaimin, that is not relevant to the subject matter under consideration.

The only exception to these conditions concerns students whose work schedules or unanticipated appointments require them to arrive for class late or leave early. In these instances I would appreciate knowing of the circumstance before it occurs and, in all such instances, request that students do so as unobtrusively as possible. Thank you.

Lecture Topics and Readings

- I Introduction – Framework of Analysis
Kopstein and Lichbach, Introduction.
Soe, articles 52-54, 40, and 22.
- II Early Developers: Britain and France
Kopstein and Lichbach, chapters 1 and 2.
Soe, articles 23-25, 51, 53 and 54.
- III Middle Developers: Germany and Japan
Kopstein and Lichbach, chapters 3 and 4.
Soe, articles 6-9, and 16-17.

- IV Late Developers: Russia and China
Kopstein and Lichbach, chapters 5 and 6.
Soe, articles 35-39, 45-47, and 50-51.
- V Experimental Developers: Mexico, India, Iran and South Africa
Kopstein and Lichbach, chapters 7-10.
Soe, articles 41-44, .
- VI Conclusion
Soe, article 49.